

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. ____

Introduced by: Sitwell, Harris, Stevenson,
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A HOUSE RESOLUTION urging the Federal Government to pass a plan for comprehensive and affordable health care benefits for the citizens of the United States of America.

Whereas, U.S. health care costs are out of control and getting worse; health insurers are demanding premium increases of more than 20 % for this year, on top of a 15% increase last year, 11% in 2001 and 8% in 2000;

Whereas, U.S. health care costs for retirees are soaring an average of 18% per year, and total U.S. spending on prescription drugs, which jumped 127% from \$51 billion in 1993 to \$116 billion in 2001, is expected to nearly triple to \$336 billion by 2010;



Whereas, Total U.S. expenditures on health care are expected to double for \$1.3 trillion in 2000 to more than \$2.6 trillion by 2010.

Whereas, Rising unemployment and increased costs are creating a tidal wave of uninsured; all through the 1990's, during supposedly good economic times, 1 million American workers lost their health insurance coverage every year, more than 2.2 million people lost their health coverage in 2001 just from increased unemployment- the largest annual increase in nearly 10 years, in 2002 the ranks of uninsured rose to 41.2 million, 14.6% of the population, the percentage of African Americans without health insurance is 19%, and among Hispanics, 33.2%. Indiana's uninsured residents rose to nearly 700,000 people;

Whereas, Lack of Health Insurance affects our health and our financial security- among hospitalized patients, the uninsured are three times more likely to die than the insured, the uninsured are less likely to receive preventive care, and tend to postpone care they cannot afford until conditions are much more severe, and more expensive to treat;

Whereas, Pharmaceutical companies play a major role in rising health costs- major pharmaceutical manufacturers spent more than twice as much on marketing and administrative activities than on research and development (34% versus 14%), and profits exceed research and development expenses (24% versus 14%) according to Kaiser Family Foundation data, these costs are passed on to the consumer, and only serve to place basic health care out of the reach of many working families and seniors;

Whereas, the U.S. health system undermines global competitiveness- the high cost of employer-based, for profit health insurance undermines the ability of U.S. firms to



compete effectively in the global marketplace when other industrialized nations subsidize health care, in the steel industry, for example, insurance costs for active and retired hourly workers averaged \$6.36 per hour in 2000, 18% of total employment costs, these costs are one direct cause of most of the 34 steel-industry bankruptcies and 16 liquidations that have wiped out health coverage for over close to 200,000 retirees, including steelworkers in Indiana; and

Whereas, In spite of its excessive cost, the U.S. health care system is ranked 37th among all nations, with higher rates of infant mortality and lower life expectancy than Canada and most other industrialized nations: Therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the
General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

SECTION 1. That the Indiana General Assembly send a message to every Indiana Congressman and Senator, to the Speaker of the U.S. House, the Senate Majority Leader, and President Bush, urging that they move with all haste to craft and pass a plan for comprehensive and affordable health care benefits for the citizens on the United States of America; that they move immediately to pass legislation for Medicare prescription drug coverage, and that they create policies that ensure victims of unfair and illegal trade policies receive the retiree health benefits that they worked their entire lives to earn.

